



Fragments

Fragments are incomplete sentences in which the independent clause is missing a subject, verb, or both. Occasionally you may see a dependent clause that contains a subject and verb and think it is a sentence, but it's not because it doesn't express a complete thought. In order for it to be a complete sentence, **an independent clause must contain a subject, predicate, and complete thought.**

Missing Subjects

A subject is the actor in the sentence, who or what that sentence is about. The part of speech you are looking for in the subject is the noun (person, place, thing, or idea).

- ⇒ **Example fragment:** Took a trip to the zoo
- ⇒ **Ask yourself:** Who or what took a trip to a zoo? Subject: The class.
- ⇒ **Example complete sentence:** The class took a trip to the zoo.

Missing Predicates

A predicate is the action in the sentence. The part of speech you are looking for in the predicate is the verb.

- ⇒ **Example fragment:** The lady in the blue dress.
- ⇒ **Ask yourself:** What happens to the lady in the blue dress? Predicate: Walked quickly to the train station.
- ⇒ **Example complete sentence:** The lady in the blue dress walked quickly to the train station.

Test Yourself

In order to correct a fragment, you may need to omit punctuation, add punctuation, or combine the fragment with another thought to create a complete sentence. Try and revise the following sentences:

1. I went the writing center today. So many tutors to choose from.
2. A long essay to write.
3. Lewis University offers many clubs to join. Which is why I like going to school here.
4. Books thrown across the library



Answer Key

1. I went the Writing Center today. **There are** so many tutors to choose from.
2. **I have** a long essay to write.
3. Lewis University offers many clubs to join. **That is** why I like going to school here.
4. Books **are** thrown across the library

Writing Tip: Read your paper out loud! It is easier to discover grammatical, stylistic, or structural errors when you hear how your ideas are arranged. At first, you may feel awkward, but this is a proofreading tool that will help you become a better writer!

Further Assistance: For more detailed help or if you have questions, visit the Writing Center located in the Lewis University Library or call 815-836-5427.